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Steve Piggot
Principal
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Dear Mr Piggot

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Kibworth Mead Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 30 November and 1 December 2022, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in May 2022.

During the inspection, Chris Stevens, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), Adrian Rollins, Ofsted Inspector, and Matthew Spoors, Ofsted Inspector, and I discussed with you, the executive principal and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) and the director of education of the Mead Educational Trust, the chair of the academy council and members of staff the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, met with pupils and scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Kibworth Mead Academy remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since September 2022, you joined the school as principal. There are new leaders of behaviour and safeguarding. A new SEND coordinator (SENDCo) is in post. Three behaviour mentors, a family support worker and safeguarding and attendance officers have joined the school. The academy council has two new members, including a local headteacher. Two subject leads have taken up post. There is the increased leadership capacity needed to drive the school's improvement.

Safeguarding is effective. Safeguarding systems are robust. Leaders are vigilant. They are tenacious. Pupils receive the correct support, including from external agencies. Staff work at pace to identify pupils who may be at risk. They are ensuring that pupils have someone to turn to in school if they need help. There is now a positive culture of safeguarding and welfare. Pupils said that they now feel safe in school.

Toilet provision has improved. There are still some areas of school where the quality of toilets is not yet good enough. Further improvement is needed.

There is close oversight of pupils who receive their education at an alternative provision. Attendance records are accurate. Leaders are in regular contact with pupils and their families. Safeguarding arrangements are robust. The curriculum for some pupils in alternative provision is poor. Pupils need to be better prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.

There are higher expectations of pupils' conduct and behaviour. Your most recent information indicates that there are fewer serious behaviour incidents. However, some teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Some older pupils' learning is still disrupted by poor behaviour.

New attendance leaders have developed some sharp systems to track and monitor pupils' attendance. The school's investment in a family support worker is pivotal. Positive relationships are building with families. Overall attendance is improving. However, attendance is consistently low for some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils in Year 11. There is little sign of sustained improvement in attendance for some of these pupils.

The new SENDCo is having a positive impact on the provision for pupils with SEND. The support for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan is improving. Teachers are gaining a greater understanding of the learning needs of these pupils. But the curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of all pupils with SEND. These pupils do not achieve as well as they could in some of the subjects that they study.

Some pupils with an EHC plan receive one-to-one support to help them learn to read. However, there is no early reading curriculum in place to support other pupils who may have a reading age below their chronological age. Leaders plan to implement a phonics-based reading curriculum. This is not yet in place. Some pupils cannot read well enough to fully access the curriculum.

The school's curriculum is improving. Leaders are setting higher expectations for what all pupils can achieve. They are addressing a legacy of pupils' underachievement. They are beginning to ensure that there is an ambitious curriculum in place. In some subjects, improvement is still needed. There is still work to do to make sure that pupils' starting points are appropriately built on. Some curriculum planning is not yet securely focused on the key component knowledge that pupils need.

The Mead Educational Trust has provided effective internal support. This has helped to significantly improve the quality of school leadership, the curriculum, safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. High-quality improvement planning is in place and is expertly monitored. There is evidence that the school is rapidly improving.

Leaders have sought external support from the local authority. This support has helped to improve the quality of safeguarding and the provision for pupils with SEND. You have led many events to seek the views of parents.

I am copying this letter to the CEO of the Mead Educational Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
His Majesty's Inspector